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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/511,301

10/15/2004

Guy Forella

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11/10/2005

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EXAMINER

RODRIGUEZ, JOSEPH C

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3653

DATE MAILED: 11/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/511,301

Applicant(s)

FORELLA ET AL.

Examiner

Joseph C. Rodriguez

Art Unit

3653

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 9 and 10 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 15 October 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 10/15/04
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: ____

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

Here, Examiner acknowledges receipt of the International Preliminary Examination Report as well as the International Search Report and the references cited therein.

The references cited in the Search Report have been considered and will be listed on any patent resulting from this application to the extent the references have been provided to the Office and are listed on the accompanying PTO-1449 form. See 37 CFR 1.98(a)(1); MPEP 1893.03(g).

Specification

The disclosure is objected to as lacking appropriate section headings as outlined in 37 CFR 1.77. See also 37 CFR 1.72-1.77; MPEP § 608.01(a). Correction is required.

Claim Objections

The claims are objected to as the form of claims 1-10 is improper. Where a claim sets forth a plurality of elements or steps, as in the instant claims, each element or step should be separated by a line indentation. See MPEP 608.01(m) and 37 CFR 1.75(i).

Claims 2-10 are also objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 1 reads "A postal sorting machine", thus the claims depending therefrom should read "The postal sorting machine".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 3 recites the limitation "each machine" (ln. 2). There is improper antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

This limitation has been interpreted as requiring the sorting machine to include a belt conveyor.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-5 and 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Rigling (US 5,226,782).

Rigling (Fig. 1-3) teaches a sorting machine having

sort outlets (shelves 12, 14) distributed in one or more horizontal rows that are superposed and parallel (fig. 2),

a bin transfer structure (Fig. 2, dolly 20 and attached transferring mechanisms) is disposed along said rows of sort outlets, said transfer structure comprising one or more superposed bin conveyors (fig. 3, loader 40 with superposed accumulation conveyors 42; col. 9, ln. 31-col. 10, ln. 24 teaching that loader is capable of taking bins towards or away from sorting machine) extending parallel (e.g., in horizontal plane) to respective rows of sort outlets, and one or more superposed gangways (fig. 2, 3, movable transfer structure 60 as well as transfer planks 28 and extensions near 58) that are movable along the rows of sort outlets (fig. 1, 2, showing movable dolly with wheels 10), each extending between a row of sort outlets and a corresponding bin conveyor to enable at least one storage bin (104) to be transferred from a sort outlet to a corresponding bin conveyor (fig. 1, 2). Here, a gangway is regarded as any bridge or transferring plane and a conveyor is regarded as any structure that conveys (i.e., transfers) an object, such as a belt conveyor (56, 56') or a transfer plane (28, 42).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rigling in view of Tilles (US 6,201,203).

Rigling as set forth above teaches all that is claimed except for expressly teaching each gangway including a set of parallel idler rollers on which the storage bins are placed. This feature, however, is well-known in the conveying arts. For instance, Tilles (Fig. 1, 4, 8) teaches this claim feature is a well known equivalent in the conveying arts to the plane structure taught by Tilles. Therefore, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the invention of Rigling as taught above as rollers are well known equivalents in the conveying arts that assist in transferring objects. See MPEP 2144.06.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 9 and 10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Any references not explicitly discussed above but made of record are considered relevant to the prosecution of the instant application.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Joseph C Rodriguez** whose telephone number is **571-272-6942** (M-F, 9 am – 6 pm, EST).

The **Official** fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is **571-273-8300**.

The examiner's **UNOFFICIAL Personal fax number** is **571-273-6942**.

Further, information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system.

Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PMR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PMR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see

<http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>

Should you have questions on access to the Private PMR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at **866-217-9197** (Toll Free).

Alternatively, inquiries of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding can also be directed to the **Receptionist** whose telephone number is **571-272-6584**. Further, the supervisor's contact information is Donald Walsh, 571-272-6944.

Signed by Examiner Joseph Rodriguez

Jcr

November 8, 2005